

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 03590 250930Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15
OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 PA-02
PRS-01 /116 W

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R 250836Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2228
INFO AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSULATE DHAHRAN

UNCLAS TEHRAN 3590

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, IZ
SUBJ: IRAQI OIL MINISTER'S INTERVIEW WITH TEHRAN JOURNALIST

1. A LENGTHY REPORT OF AN INTERVIEW GIVEN BY IRAQI OIL MINISTER
TAYIH "ABD AL-KARIM TO A TEHRAN JOURNAL REPORTER APPEARED IN
THE JOURNAL ON APRIL 23. THE ARTICLE WHICH WAS ENTITLED SAUDI
PRICE HIKE IMMINENT, NOTED THAT THE INTERVIEW TOOK PLACE
SHORTLY AFTER KARIM'S MEETING WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD IN RIYADH.

2. KARIM SAID THAT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE FIRST QUARTER DEMONSTRATED
THAT SAUDI ARABIA COULD NOT DICTATE INTERNATIONAL OIL PRICES. HE WAS
ALSO

QUOTED AS SAYING BEGIN QUOTE: RIYADH ALSO REALIZED THAT ALTHOUGH
IT INITIALLY SUCCEEDED IN GAINING SOME SUPPORT FOR LINKING OIL
PRICES TO THE ROLE THE U.S. PLAYS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE
DAMAGE RESULTING FROM INSISTING ON LOWER OIL PRICES DID OUT-
WEIGH THE BENEFITS. SO, I AM ASSURED THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS ABOUT
TO STOP PLAYING THE ISOLATIONIST'S ROLE IN OPEC AND
FOLLOW THE MAJORITY DECISIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. END

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 03590 250930Z

QUOTE.

3. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE LEVEL OF OIL PRICES REQUIRED
TO COMPENSATE FOR INTERNATIONAL INFLATION AND EXCHANGE
RATE FLUCTUATIONS, KARIM REPORTEDLY SAID THAT OPEC IS
JUSTIFIED IN RAISING OIL PRICES BY 25 PERCENT IN 1977.

4. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES, KARIM IDENTIFIED PRODUCTION PROGRAMMING AS PERHAPS THE MOST VITAL ISSUE FACING OPEC. HE ALSO CALLED FOR GREATER COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITHIN OPEC AND OAPEC IN THE FIELDS OF PETROCHEMICALS, REFINERY CONSTRUCTION AND EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL GAS.

5. SPEAKING ABOUT IRAQI OIL DEVELOPMENTS, KARIM SAID THAT HIS COUNTRY WILL PURCHASE A NUMBER OF NEW TANKERS THIS YEAR. HE SAID THAT IRAQ'S CURRENT TANKER FLEET HAS A TOTAL CAPACITY OF 800,000 DWT, AND THAT IT WILL REACH 1.4 MILLION TONS BY THE END OF 1977.

MIKLOS

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